

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND EDUCATION (OE) WORKING GROUP
Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary Office
Scituate, MA
10:00am to 4:30pm
7 April 2004

MEETING SUMMARY

ACTION: Upcoming meetings
May 14, 2004

ACTION: User group matrix

Based on today's discussion and comments submitted by OE Working Group members, the User Group Matrix will be compiled by Anne Smrcina and Karen Fox. The draft will be distributed to members when completed, and further discussed at the next meeting.

ACTION: Comparison of the Sanctuary with the Cape Cod National Seashore

Maureen McConnell and Jack Crowley will work together to develop a method of conveying a comparison of the Cape Cod National Seashore and the Sanctuary (e.g., mapping).

Working Group Attendees (April 7, 2004)

Name	WG Seat / Affiliation	Attendance
Richard Wheeler, Chair	CCMNH, Ed WG Chair	Present
Anne Smrcina, Staff Lead	SBNMS, Ed WG Team Lead	Present
William Spitzer	NEAq – V.P. Exhibits/Programs	
Tony LaCasse	NEAq – Media Relations Manager	
Maureen McConnell	Museum of Science – Exhibit Planner	Present
Andrea Thorrold	COSEE Coordinator – Woods Hole	Present
Jack Crowley	MME / UMass Dart. / New Bedford Oceanarium	Present
Nicola Micozzi	Science Supervisor – Plymouth Public Schools	
Tracy Hart	Marine Exc. Assoc. – Maine Sea Grant	
Jennifer McCann	URI Coastal Research Ctr. / RI Sea Grant	
Lou Gainor	Capt. Nautical Talk – WATD Radio	Present
Tom Clark	Principal – Stratagia	Present
Charles Rasak	Creative Director – Creative Resources Group	
Wendy Northcross	Exec. Dir – Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce	
Kristen McMenamy	Marketing Manager	
Jennifer Ferguson-Mitchell	Public Affairs Deputy Dir. – IFAW	Present
Christopher Bailey	IFAW	
Sue Moynihan	Dir. of Int.&Cult.Res.Mgmt. – CC Natl Seashore	Present
Lt. Dean Jones	Public Affairs Officer – US Coast Guard, Dist.1	
Amy Thomas	US Coast Guard, Dist.1	
Jay Michaud	Fisherman / Mar. Surv / MA Lobstermens Assoc.	
Cynde Bierman	Sr. Naturalist – Ocean All. / Cp. Ann Whale Watch	
Bill Fairbanks	Pres. Hbr. Moor. Serv. / MA Marine Trades Assoc.	Present

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, ADOPTION OF AGENDA, AND ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Anne Smrcina opened the meeting and gave an overview of the meeting agenda. Several members who have been regularly attending the Working Groups were unable to attend today's meeting. However, most members were able to submit completed User Group Matrices prior to the meeting; therefore, their comments could be incorporated into today's discussion regarding development of the matrix.

TASK – DEVELOPMENT OF THE USER GROUP MATRIX

The goal for this task was to complete as much of the User Group Matrix as possible, and look for areas that fit together and/or overlap.

The “Objectives/Goals” line item was completed for each user group, as follows:

USER GROUP MATRIX

Group Characteristics / Usage	Whale Watch Boats	Recreational Boaters	Commercial Fishermen	Large Vessels	Divers	Science Research
Objectives (Goals)	Increase awareness; reduce impacts on sanctuary resources; promote boating safety; build a constituency.	Increase awareness; reduce impacts on sanctuary resources; promote boating safety; build a constituency; prevent illegal dumping (littering); prevent illegal fishing.	Increase awareness; reduce impacts on sanctuary resources; reduce entanglement; prevent illegal fishing; sustain fisheries; build opportunities for increasing dialog.	Increase awareness (passengers, owners, operators); reduce impacts on sanctuary resources (water quality, debris).	Increase awareness; reduce impacts on sanctuary resources; provide opportunities for recreational diving (e.g., shipwreck trail).	Increase awareness; reduce impacts on sanctuary resources; increase information sharing between SB and research groups.
Strategy						
Tactics						
Challenges						
Media						
Partners						
Evaluation Results						

USER GROUP MATRIX (CONTINUED)

Group Characteristics / Usage	Education Community (K-16)	Non-Governmental Organizations	Government Agencies	Media	Decision Makers	Influencers
Objectives (Goals)	Increase awareness; develop sense of stewardship; emphasize the definition of "sanctuary;" develop future constituency.	Increase awareness; build partnerships.	Increase awareness; coordinate outreach and education activities.	Increase awareness of the Sanctuary and promote it as a resource for marine-related information.	Increase awareness; increase communication between SB and decision makers.	Increase awareness; increase communication between SB and influencers.
Strategy						
Tactics						
Challenges						
Media						
Partners						
Evaluation Results						

Three changes were made to the structure of the matrix:

- The education column has been changed from “K-12” to “K-16.”
- “Challenges” has been added as a line item, for the identification of potential difficulties with implementation of particular strategies and tactics (see 4th line item of the matrix).
- The “Partner” column has been changed to “Non-Governmental Organizations.” The group decided that, because each user group will generate some form of a partnership specific to its own needs (see 6th line item of the matrix – Partners), there was no need to also identify “Partners” as a separate user group.

Much of the discussion regarding the User Group Matrix can be used to generate the remainder of the matrix, and can also be used to help develop Action Items.

The group should look to other Sanctuaries that have developed Action Plans, and utilize some of this material. For example, how have other Sanctuaries developed visitor centers, and/or exhibits? We have determined where we would like this to occur for Stellwagen: the North Shore, Boston, and Cape Cod. But we need some guidance on how to make it happen.

Regulations

Existing guidelines for the Sanctuary are appropriate, and a great deal of thought went into their development. It is not the guidelines themselves that are sometimes a problem; rather, adherence to the

guidelines. Enforcement is very difficult. An example would be whale watching boats: user surveys have been conducted, and through the survey results, it is clear that there are a violation in guidelines. (Generally speaking, the problems involve time, money and corporate policies.) But another consideration is, even those who are aware of the guidelines are not necessarily able to determine if they are within them (e.g., difficult to determine the distance between the boat and whale, when the whale is beneath the surface).

The parks department has used “Negotiated Rule Making” and it has been relatively successful. Interest groups are brought together to determine the rules; they are part of the process. These are rules, not regulations; a stairstep process.

Partnerships

Legally, the Sanctuary is able to develop corporate partnerships, as long as there is a formal agreement in place. However, there are limitations that include restrictions on the use of logos for both the Sanctuary and partners, and also restrictions on which companies the Sanctuary can do business with.

Considering the limited funding available for outreach and education by the Sanctuary, partnerships can be very beneficial. However, partnerships are also frequently used as a fall-back for the lack of funding. And to an extent, the Sanctuary can lose some control of its intended direction when relying on partners to manage projects, so partnerships are not always the answer.

Programs and information sharing

A system of recognition, such as whale watch passenger surveys that are returned to SBNMS, and that are meant to “grade” boats, could have benefits. Not only does this provide “watchful eyes” on the behavior of the whale watching industry, it can also result in positive promotion of the individual whale watching boats. Awards might be distributed for good grades, and posted on boats. Similarly, the Sanctuary has considered an accreditation program, e.g., the Sanctuary Certification Program. Again, certificates can be posted on boats, and promote a good image for the whale watching industry and/or for the individual boats.

The Sanctuary is developing an education program, “Whaling to Watching” which focuses on similarities between certain aspects of the whaling industry, and today’s whale watching industry. For example, the techniques used to harpoon and kill whales in the past is very similar to the techniques we now use to conduct rescue missions.

The concept of “education projects” was discussed. For example, chartering a whale watching boat to take groups of children out for educational projects. Children can be given specific tasks, such as counting the number of fishing boats they see, recording the types of fishing boats, the number of whales and types of marine life, etc... With the proper equipment such as GPS units, they could also collect geographic locations. This would not only make the trip fun and educational, the data collected by the children could be useful to the Sanctuary. (Important to the educational process is that anything done through the schools must be aligned with Standard Tests, or it will not be accepted into the curriculum.)

There have been significant geologic finds in Stellwagen Bank, such as mastodon teeth and other artifacts. This again presents an opportunity to connect the past with the present, for example with phrases such as “where mastodons once roamed, whales now swim.” It also presents an opportunity for some “hands-on” material for exhibits.

October 22 of this year will be the 150th anniversary of the discovery of Stellwagen. (The first map of Stellwagen was released in 1855.) A primary focus of the importance of Stellwagen should be the fact that within the Gulf of Maine, it is the first major feature as ships enter Massachusetts Bay for Boston.

Publicity is extremely important to the education and outreach process. Press releases are cheap and provide quick publicity. It is worth the time to compile contact lists, develop relationships with reporters, and keep a file of story ideas. The stories can be taken to magazines, newspapers, the NOAA Weather Channel, etc... And the media should have no trouble quickly finding information about the Sanctuary. The Stellwagen Bank website is an extremely important information resource. When the media uses this resource, they will then pass that information on again. Research material can be shared through the website, and made available to the public, the media, educators and decision makers. And it might be possible to increase the amount of information that the research community shares with the Sanctuary, especially through contract/grant requirements for education components. The protocols for these education requirements should probably be done through National, at least with respect to NSF projects.

FINAL COMMENTS

All User Group Matrices completed and submitted by OE WG members will be compiled and redistributed as one document to the group.

Meeting adjourned at 3pm.



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Outreach and Education Working Group

AGENDA
7 April 2004
10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.
SBNMS Headquarters
Scituate, MA

10:00 – 10:15	Welcome, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes Richard Wheeler, CCMNH and Ed WG Chair Anne Smrcina, SBNMS, Ed WG Team Lead
10:15 – 12:00	Develop outreach and education user group matrix with working group input
12:00 -- 1:00	<i>Working Lunch -- A review of other sanctuary action plans</i> <i>Anne Smrcina</i>
1:00 -- 1:30	Finalize Goal Statement
1:30 -- 2:00	Review scoping comments to ensure all points addressed in matrix
2:00 -- 3:45	Develop outlines for Outreach and Education Action Plans
3:45 – 4:00	W.G. Logistics (Meeting Dates, Technical Advisors), Next Steps and Summary
4:00	Adjourn

